NOSTALGIA

Mobile library scrapped and how New Town became a 'sorry mess'

***MIKE PETTY** AND **JAMES MILNER** LOOK THROUGH THE **CAMBRIDGE NEWS** ARCHIVES AT SOME OF THE STORIES FROM THIS DAY IN THE PAST*

Wood dredged up from the bottom of the Cam at Upware

Floodgate discovered at Upware – 1989

WORKERS near Upware have spent a week dredging up an historic floodgate which may have been lying in the Cam for more than a century.

Tons of wood which went into make a later 18th century staunch came to light when the National Rivers Authority decided to clean the bottom of the river after complaints from the Viscountess Bury pleasure cruiser of obstructions to navigation.

More than 10 four-metre stakes the size of tree trunks were hauled from the water as well as 20 pieces of planks.

Mobile library fleet is scrapped – 1981

THE much-heralded fleet of electrically powered mobile libraries, with which the county council had hoped to save a small fortune in energy costs, has been scrapped.

One vehicle has been banned from public roads because of braking defects, a second returned to the manufacturers for unsuccessful attempts at improving range and speed.

The remaining order for eight vehicles has been cancelled and now the county council and manufacturers are locked in a legal battle.

New diesel-powered libraries will be bought to keep the service running.

New development a sorry mess – 1978

THE New Town area of Cambridge was developed in the 1820s with unpretentious terraces, many of which were ill-built. But at least they had unity.

Today, largely demolished and patchily replaced, New Town strikes one as a sorry mess.
Panton Street is a mixture of discreet, elegant houses with intrusive modern developments.

The St Anthony's Walk almshouses are a discordant construction, their severe frontage characterised by jutting ventilatory contraptions: a battery-house for humans.

Opposite begins the Russell Court complex of flats; as such developments go, the quality is good and attempts have been made at a humanised appearance.

Will its stark modern brick ever attain the serene texture of the houses over the way.

Government go-ahead for bypasses – 1973

THE Cambridge bypasses have been given the government go-ahead.

Work may now begin in less than a year on the £30million-plus scheme to give the city its biggest new road complex in history.

Within four years, Cambridge is likely to have 14 miles of new motorway and nine miles of new trunk road to bleed heavy lorries and other traffic away from the historic heart of the city.

It will also mean a much-improved A604 route between Cambridge and Huntingdon – at present, one of the busiest and most accident-prone roads for miles.

Today's announcement ends years of argument and months of speculation following a record-breaking public inquiry stretching over six months early last year

TV would make residents' lives complete – 1957

I HAD always thought of old peoples' homes being sad places where equally sad old people spend the end of their life.

Primrose Croft stands in a lovely garden filled with flowers backing onto school playing fields.

Each of the 35 residents has an airy room with attractive curtains and a lock-up cupboard.

The women were busy doing knitting and crocheting, the wireless in the lounge is also enjoyed and the matron hopes one day to afford a television set.

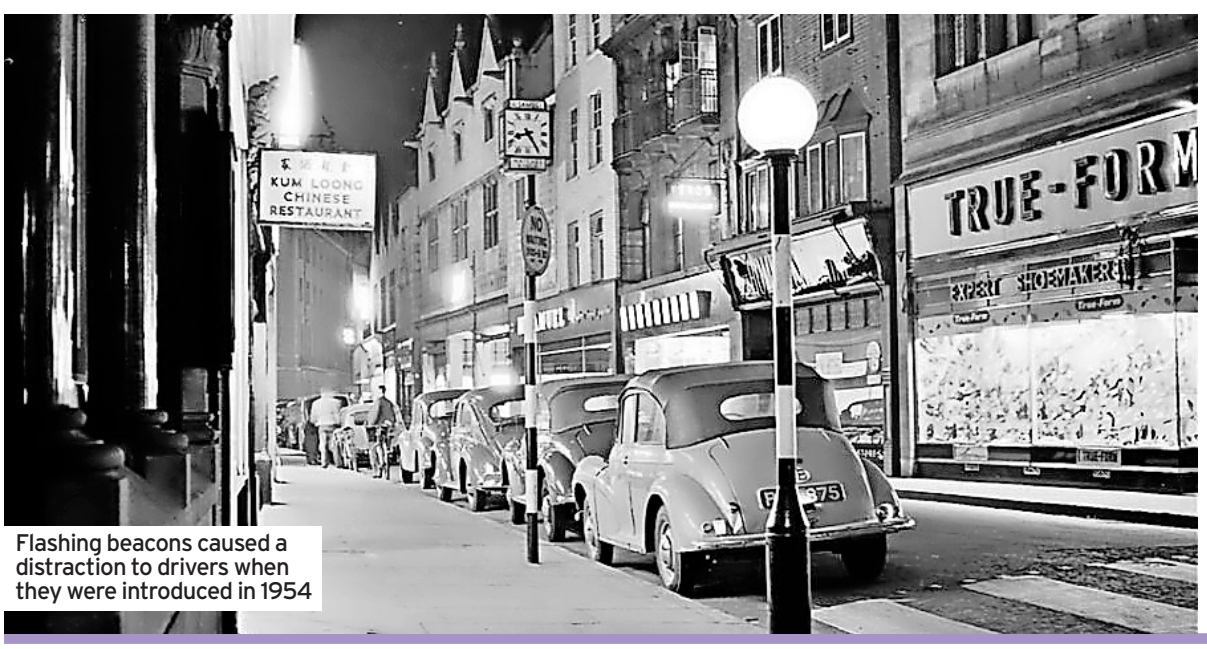
Mixed reception for flashing beacons – 1954

THE new beacons guarding pedestrian crossings have begun flashing in Cambridge.

The flashing beacons which continue their winking by day and night make the crossings they serve official ways for pedestrians which motorists must observe.

But some say that the flashing lights are not easy to see in daytime when a great deal of traffic makes them useful.

Quite a few motorists are opposed with opinions ranging from "not worth a light" to "just another thing to look for".



Flashing beacons caused a distraction to drivers when they were introduced in 1954

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